

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

A NEW SUBSPECIES OF MOUNTAIN SHEEP FROM
WESTERN TEXAS AND SOUTHEASTERN
NEW MEXICO.

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In my report on the mammals of Texas* I referred the mountain sheep of the Guadalupe Mountains to *Ovis mexicanus* Merriam, mainly on a comparison of external characters in the old rams. Recently in taking the matter up more thoroughly I have had occasion to compare series of female skulls and find that they show excellent and very constant cranial characters, which in the old rams have become partially concealed by the excessive bone-growth and closely ankylosed sutures. In the light of these facts it is now impossible to refer the sheep from the Guadalupe Mountains of Texas and New Mexico to *mexicanus* and equally so to *auduboni* or *canadensis*, † and a subspecific name seems best to express its relationship. Its actual relationship with typical *canadensis* will not be known until much more critical work is done on the group with more material than has been brought together. The best cranial characters in mountain sheep are shown by four- or five-year-old females, and if collectors will bear this in mind and save at least as many females as males the future value of museum material will be greatly increased.

***Ovis canadensis texianus* subsp. nov.**

Type from Guadalupe Mountains, Texas, ♀ ad. skin and skull, 118,255, U. S. National Museum, Biological Survey Collection, collected September 2, 1902, by Vernon Bailey. Original No. 7971.

* Biological Survey of Texas, North American Fauna No. 25, U. S. Biological Survey, Dept. of Agric., Oct. 24, 1905.

† In using the name *canadensis* instead of *cevrina* I am following the custom of the Biological Survey in not rejecting a name in good current use for one without a definite claim to priority.

General characters.—In size and general appearance very similar to *Ovis mexicanus*, but slightly darker in coloration, with facial part of skull, nasals and palate extremely narrow.

Color.—In specimen collected September 2, upper parts, except the usual large white rump patch, dull buffy brown or soiled brownish gray; nose whitish; rump patch pure white with medium dark line very narrow and not continuous from tail to dark area of back; belly white posteriorly; whitish lines down inner side of hind legs to hoofs, and down front legs usually only to dewclaws (in the type reaching to the hoofs).

Cranial characters.—Skull long and narrow, with the heavy molars of *auduboni* and *mexicanus*, but different from all other species of the United States and Mexico in the relatively narrow muzzle, nasals and palate in both sexes. Adult males with medium heavy pale yellowish horns as in *mexicanus*, but face more concave; upper molars arranged in a nearly straight line. Adult female with long, thin, slender yellowish horns, face less flat and orbits more prominent than in *mexicanus*; upper molar series nearly straight, nasals conspicuously long and narrow.

Measurements.—Type ♀, 4½ years old, from dry specimen; total length, 1530; tail vertebrae imperfect; hind foot, 355; ear from notch, 90; from crown, 100. Adult male, topotype No. 110,388, measured dry; total length, 1490; tail vertebrae 70; hind foot, 370; ear from notch, 95; from crown, 110.

Skull of type: basal length, 246; alveolar length of upper tooth row, 90; of lower tooth row, 92; width over orbits, 150; width at base of horns, 100; greatest width of nasals, 35; width of palate between alveoli of next to hind molars, 42. *Skull* of five-year-old male, topotype, No. 110,047; basal length, 270; alveolar length of upper tooth row, 89; of lower, 91; greatest width of nasals, 48; of palate, 46; circumference of horns at base of fourth annual ring, 345; at base of fifth annual ring, 360.

Remarks.—The skull of the female in this form presents the opposite extreme from the conspicuously broad, flat face and nasals of *mexicanus* and presents another extreme of difference from the dark horns, light and well arched molar series, small short nasals and wide rostrum of *canadensis*; it agrees with *auduboni* of the northern Badlands only in the heavy dentition.